

Message Text

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ACTION STR-07

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EUR-12 NEA-11 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
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LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15
ITC-01 TRSE-00 ICA-11 SP-02 SOE-02 OMB-01 DOE-15
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P 011201Z JUN 78
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0297
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS

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USMTN, USEEC
ACTION STR PASS ELECTRICALLY
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E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS: MTN, ETRD, EEC
SUBJECT: U.S./EC BILATERAL ON U.S. INDUSTRIAL TARIFF
REQUESTS

REF: GENEVA 7878

1. SUMMARY. ON MAY 17 USMTN DEL (MCNAMARA ET AL) MET
WITH EC COMMISSION DEL AND MEMBER STATES LED BY DUGIMONT
FOR DISCUSSION OF U.S. REQUESTS OF EC FOR MAINTENANCE OF
FORMULA OFFER ON CERTAIN ITEMS IN EC'S POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL
LIST. IN ITEM-BY-ITEM REVIEW, USDEL PRESSED FOR EXPLANA-
TION OF WHY THESE ITEMS HAD BEEN PLACED ON POSSIBLE WITH-
DRAWAL LIST AND INDICATED U.S. WILL HAVE PROBLEM MAINTAIN-
ING ITS OFFER ON SIMILAR ITEMS SHOULD THE EC IMPLEMENT ITS
WITHDRAWALS AND FURTHER NOTED THAT FOR MOST OF THE PRODUCTS
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ON THE REQUEST LIST, EC EXPORTS TO THE U.S. ARE OF CON-
SIDERABLE MAGNITUDE. EC DEL PROVIDED BRIEF ANALYSES OF
EACH ITEM'S IMPORT SENSITIVITY, SOMETIMES HINTING AT EX-
OUT POSSIBILITIES. IN CLOSING, DUGIMONT RELATED GENERAL
COMMENTS ON U.S. TARIFF OFFER AS REPORTED IN REFTEL. END
SUMMARY.

2. IN EXAMINATION OF CHEMICALS REQUESTS, WHICH ACCOUNT FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF OF ITEMS ON SUBJECT REQUEST LIST, EC COMMENTS GENERALLY FELL INTO FOLLOWING PATTERN: (A) EC PRODUCERS HAVE LARGELY FOLLOWED THROUGH ON PRE-1973 OIL CRISIS PLANS FOR CAPACITY EXPANSION, BUT DEMAND HAS SLACKENED CREATING SIGNIFICANT UNDERUTILIZATION OF CAPACITY; (B) EC CHEMICAL IMPORTS FROM EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE GROWN AT ALARMING RATE; AND (C) U.S. PETROCHEMICAL PRODUCERS ARE IN ADVANTAGEOUS COMPETITIVE POSITION DUE TO LOWER U.S. OIL AND GAS PRICES. USDEL REMARKED ON EXTREMELY FORTHCOMING U.S. OFFER ON CHEMICALS, AND NOTED THAT PROBLEMS FACING EC PRODUCERS ARE ALSO FELT BY U.S. INDUSTRY. USDEL FURTHER NOTED THAT PASSAGE OF ANTICIPATED ENERGY LEGISLATION WILL RESULT IN EVENTUAL ELIMINATION OF PRICE CONTROLS WHICH WILL COINCIDE WITH SLOW TARIFF REDUCTION STAGING SOUGHT BY EC. USDEL CITED ON AN ITEM-BY-ITEM BASIS THE DISPARITY THAT WOULD EXIST BETWEEN EC AND U.S. OFFERS SHOULD EC CARRY THROUGH ON ITS POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL LIST ON CHEMICALS.

3. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF COMMENTS MADE IN ITEM-BY-ITEM REVIEW OF U.S. REQUESTS:

(A) 2929B1 -- EC NOTED IMPORTS WERE MAINLY FROM MTN NONPARTICIPANTS AND STATED BELIEF THAT EXCEPTION WOULD NOT HURT U.S. EXPORTS, WHICH ACCOUNT FOR ONLY 0.5 PERCENT OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EC'S MFN IMPORTS.

(B) 2901D2, 3902C1A, 3902C4, 3902C7A, AND 3902C7B -- EC DEL DISCUSSED THESE ITEMS IN GROUP, REFERRING TO THEM AS "BULK PLASTICS." USDEL NOTED THAT IT DID NOT CONCUR WITH EC'S REFERENCE TO ALL THESE ITEMS AS "BULK PLASTICS" AND THAT USDEL COULD NOT ACCEPT THE EC'S CURRENT PLASTICS SLUMP AS RELEVANT JUSTIFICATION FOR EXCEPTING ALL THESE ITEMS. EC DEL AGREED TO CONSIDER EX-OUT POSSIBILITIES FOR PRODUCTS OF SPECIFIC CONCERN TO EC. EC DEL NOTED THAT EC INDUSTRY CAPACITY IS CURRENTLY 15 MILLION METRIC TONS, OR ONE-THIRD OF WORLD CAPACITY WHILE CAPACITY UTILIZATION IS LESS THAN 70 PERCENT. IMPORTS FROM EASTERN EUROPE, PRICES FOR WHICH OFTEN HAVE NO RELATION TO COSTS, HAVE INCREASED SHARPLY; OPEC COUNTRIES ARE ALSO VIEWED AS POSSIBLE THREAT. USDEL NOTED THAT IF EC WITHDRAWALS ARE IMPLEMENTED FOR THESE ITEMS, EC DUTIES WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY TWICE THE U.S. OFFER RATES. ON EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, USDEL NOTED THAT IF PRICES ARE NOT RELATED TO MATERIAL COSTS, THEN THE TARIFF IS NOT AN EFFECTIVE TRADE BARRIER. ON OPEC COUNTRIES, USDEL CITED REPORTS SHOWING OPEC PRODUCERS WILL FACE COSTS 60 TO 80 PERCENT

HIGHER THAN EC PRODUCERS DUE TO NEW PLANT EXPENDITURES,
WATER COSTS, ETC.

(C) 2902A2A1, 2902A2A2, 2902A2B -- USDEL NOTED HIGH
TRADE INTEREST IN SECOND ITEM AND REVIEWED HIGH EC
DUTIES, LOWER DUTIES OF JAPAN, AND LOWEST DUTIES OF U.S.
EC DEL CITED HIGH COST OF ENERGY AS REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL
CONSIDERATION. USDEL EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT FOR THESE
ITEMS, AS WITH OTHERS, THE U.S. SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THE
PRIMARY TARGET. EC DEL REPLIED THAT THERE WERE SOME
IMPORTS FROM ROMANIA THAT ALSO SEEMED TO BE CAUSING
DIFFICULTIES. ON 2902A2B, EC DEL INDICATED THAT AN EX-
OUT FOR PRODUCTS OTHER THAN VINYL CHLORIDE MAY BE
POSSIBLE.

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USMTN, USEEC
ACTION STR PASS ELECTRICALLY
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(D) 2904A1 -- USDEL NOTED THAT WHILE CURRENT U.S.

EXPORTS ARE SMALL, METHYL ALCOHOL IS CONSIDERED TO BE A PRODUCT OF THE FUTURE AND THAT SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS ARE BEING MADE IN THE U.S. AND EC. EC DEL EXPRESSED CONCERN REGARDING IMPORTS FROM EASTERN EUROPE AND AGAIN NOTED U.S. PRODUCERS' ADVANTAGEOUS PRICES FOR NATURAL GAS.

(E) 2913G1, 2914A2B2 -- EC DEL REMARKED THAT THERE WERE NO U.S. EXPORTS TO EC OF FIRST ITEM AND THAT IMPORTS FROM EASTERN EUROPE WERE PRIMARY CONCERN FOR BOTH ITEMS. AFTER USDEL'S EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS, EC DEL PROMISED TO RE-EXAMINE REQUEST.

(F) 2914A2C1 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL WAS PRINCIPALLY AIMED AT VINYL ACETATE, PRODUCERS OF WHICH ARE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY HIGH ENERGY COSTS. IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RESPONSE, USDEL REQUESTED THAT EC SPECIFICALLY EX-OUT VINYL ACETATE AND EXCLUDE OTHER ACETATES FROM POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL LIST.

(G) 2914B4A, 2914B4B, 2915C2 -- ON FIRST ITEM, EC DEL NOTED THAT JAPAN WAS PRINCIPAL SUPPLIER; USDEL INDICATED WE HAVE MANY NEW FIRMS COMING INTO THIS MARKET. ON SECOND ITEM, EC DEL NOTED OVERCAPACITY AND ENERGY COST PROBLEMS BUT EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS EX-OUT POSSIBILITIES. ON THIRD ITEM, EC DEL NOTED THAT TPA AND DMT ARE INTER-MEDIATES FOR FIBER PRODUCTION, THE CURRENT OVERSUPPLY OF WHICH HAS LED TO CREATION OF THE FIBER CRISIS CARTEL.

(H) 2916A4A -- EC DEL NOTED PRESENT OVERCAPACITY IN BOTH EC AND U.S. DUE TO MISCALCULATION OF DEMAND AND EXPRESSED FEAR THAT U.S. SURPLUS COULD CAUSE WIDE PRICE FLUCTUATIONS IN EC MARKET. EC DEL ALSO NOTED THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS PRINCIPAL SUPPLIER.

(I) 2927 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT THIS ITEM IS SUBJECT TO ASP ON U.S. SIDE AND THAT EC HAS NOT HAD TIME TO SUFFICIENTLY EXAMINE THIS REQUEST. IN RESPONSE TO USDEL'S QUERY, EC DEL AGREED TO INDICATE WHICH NITRILES ARE IMPORT SENSITIVE. (FYI: USDEL SUSPECTS NITRILES OF CONCERN TO EC ARE THOSE USED IN THE MANUFACTURE OF ACRYLIC FIBERS.)

(J) 3102B, 3102C -- EC DEL NOTED THAT FOR FIRST ITEM, 99 PERCENT OF IMPORTS ARE FROM EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. FOR SECOND ITEM, ROMANIA AND POLAND ARE PRINCIPAL SUPPLIERS; ALSO, EC INDUSTRY IS FACING OVERCAPACITY AND FALLING PRICES.

(K) 4202A -- EC DEL INDICATED IMPORTS FROM HONG KONG,

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KOREA AND TAIWAN CAUSING PROBLEMS FOR EC INDUSTRY AND THAT U.S. OFFER WAS NOT OVERLY GENEROUS IN THIS AREA. USDEL NOTED THAT EVEN ALLOWING FOR EXCEPTIONS IN U.S. OFFER, AVERAGE U.S. DUTIES FOR THESE ITEMS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW AVERAGE FOR EC.

(L) 4411 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT U.S., CANADA, SCANDANAVIA AND BRAZIL HAVE MUCH LOWER PRODUCTION COSTS FOR THESE ARTICLES BECAUSE OF ECONOMIES OF SCALE FLOWING FROM ABUNDANCE OF RAW MATERIAL. EC DEMAND HAS SLACKENED BECAUSE OF BUILDING SLUMP. THIS FACTOR, PLUS LOW-PRICED IMPORTS FROM BRAZIL AND POLAND HAVE CAUSED HEAVY LOSSES AND SEVERE UNEMPLOYMENT IN THIS INDUSTRY, WHICH CANNOT BE SACRIFICED DUE TO ITS FUNCTION IN RESIDUAL FOREST PRODUCT INDUSTRY.

(M) 4815B, 4819 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT PROBLEMS FOR THESE ITEMS STEM FROM GENERAL PAPER INDUSTRY PROBLEMS. ON FIRST ITEM, EC'S MAIN CONCERN IS WITH MAINTENANCE OF TARIFF HOMOGENEITY, PARTICULARLY RE PAPER. ON SECOND ITEM, EC DEL INDICATED THAT CURRENT MARKET PRICES ARE TOO LOW FOR RATIONAL PRODUCTION. USDEL NOTED KEEN U.S. EXPORT INTERESTS, PARTICULARLY REGARDING FIRST ITEM WHERE INTEREST IS PRIMARILY IN "OTHER ADHESIVE STRIPS."

(N) 5601B -- EC DEL NOTED THAT PRINCIPAL SUPPLIERS OF THIS ITEM ARE ALL NONPARTICIPANTS IN MTN -- MOSTLY FROM EASTERN EUROPE. USDEL NOTED THAT U.S. FORMULA OFFER ON THESE ITEMS WOULD MAKE U.S. TARIFFS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN EC'S.

(O) 7607, 7616C1, 7616C2, 7616D -- EC DEL INDICATED THAT PRIMARY CONCERN IN ALUMINUM ITEMS IS RATE HARMONIZATION, BUT ALSO NOTED HIGH ENERGY UTILIZATION IN MANUFACTURE OF ALUMINUM, GIVING EC A COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE. USDEL STATED THAT AS TRADE DATA SHOW, U.S. INTEREST IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRIMARILY IN LAST ITEM.

(P) 8462 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT THIS POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL WAS AIMED PRIMARILY AT JAPAN, WITH WHOM EC HAS

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USMTN USEEC
ACTION STR PASS ELECTRICALLY
STR PASS CODEL

THAT PRIMARY CONCERN IN ALUMINUM ITEMS IS RATE HARMONIZA-
TION, BUT ALSO NOTED HIGH ENERGY UTILIZATION IN MANU-
FACTURE OF ALUMINUM, GIVING EC A COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE.
USDEL STATED THAT AS TRADE DATA SHOW, U.S. INTEREST IS
PRIMARILY IN LAST ITEM.

(P) 8462 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT THIS POSSIBLE WITH-
DRAWAL WAS AIMED PRIMARILY AT JAPAN, WITH WHOM EC HAS
ANTIDUMPING PROBLEMS. EC ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO CREATE EX-
OUT HERE SO AS NOT TO AFFECT BULK OF U.S. TRADE INTERESTS,
BUT FOUND THIS TO BE TECHNICALLY IMPOSSIBLE. EC DEL
INDICATED IT WAS ANXIOUS TO HEAR ANY PROPOSALS WE MAY HAVE
IN THIS REGARD. USDEL NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH U.S. HAS
SEVERAL EXCEPTIONS IN THESE ITEMS, U.S. FORMULA OFFERS
AFFECT OVER \$30 MILLION OF EC EXPORTS TO THE U.S.

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(Q) 8463 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL

ONLY AFFECTS HOUSED UNITS. USDEL NOTED HIGH VOLUME OF EC EXPORTS TO U.S. OF SUCH ARTICLES, AND CALLED ATTENTION TO FORTHCOMING U.S. OFFER IN THIS AREA.

(R) 8501A1, 8501B -- EC DEL EXPRESSED DESIRE TO POSTPONE DISCUSSION OF THESE ITEMS SINCE LATE RECEIPT OF THESE REQUESTS DID NOT ALLOW FOR ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION.

(S) 8609B, 8609C, 8609D -- EC DEL NOTED PREVALENCE OF IMPORTS FROM EASTERN EUROPE, PARTICULARLY GDR. USDEL NOTED HIGH VOLUME OF U.S. IMPORTS FROM THE EC OF THESE ITEMS (APPROXIMATELY \$12 MILLION) AND U.S. OFFER OF FORMULA AND GREATER REDUCTIONS.

(T) 8701C1, 8701C2 -- USDEL INDICATED HIGH DEGREE OF INTEREST IN EC MAKING AT LEAST A FORMULA OFFER ON THESE ITEMS, FOR WHICH U.S. IS PRINCIPAL SUPPLIER AND HIGHLY COMPETITIVE. USDEL FURTHER NOTED THAT HIGH EC TARIFFS MASK WHAT TRADE WOULD BE WITH LESSER DUTIES. EC DEL NOTED THAT THESE ITEMS ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF INDUSTRIAL/UTILITY VEHICLE SECTOR AND PROVIDED FOLLOWING PRODUCTION DATA (IN MILLIONS UNITS):

| - | U.S. | JAPAN | EC |
|------|------|-------|-----|
| 1976 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 1.2 |
| 1977 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 1.2 |

EC DEL NOTED FURTHER THAT JAPAN HAS BECOME SERIOUS COMPETITOR IN ADDITION TO U.S., PARTICULARLY IN AFRICAN, SOUTH AMERICAN, AND FAR EASTERN MARKETS. EC INDUSTRY RECENTLY ATTEMPTED TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIES OF SCALE, BUT MARKET SLUMP HAS NEGATED THESE ATTEMPTS. EC DEL ADMITTED THAT THESE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSSIBLE WITHDRAWALS WERE AIMED AT THE U.S. AND JAPAN.

(U) 8702B2A1AA22 -- EC DEL NOTED THAT BECAUSE OF LARGE U.S. MARKET, U.S. PRODUCERS CAN MASS PRODUCE. BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED SIZE OF THE EC MARKET, SOME PROTECTION IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE INDUSTRY'S SURVIVAL. AS EVIDENCE OF SMALLNESS OF MARKET, EC DEL NOTED THAT ONLY 212 DUMPERS WERE PRODUCED IN GERMANY IN 1977. USDEL NOTED THAT THIS IS HIGH PRIORITY ITEM FOR U.S., PARTICULARLY SINCE PRICE IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT DETERMINANT.

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